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REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 18, 2007. Claims 1-49 were pending, with claims 29-49 having been withdrawn by the Patent Office from examination. By this Amendment, claim 10 and unexamined and non-elected claims 29-49 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, and claim 1 has been amended to include the features formerly recited in now-canceled claim 10, and claims 19 and 27 have been amended by rewriting them in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claims 1-9 and 11-28 are presented for reconsideration, with claims 1, 19 and 27 being in independent form.

Claim 10 was objected to as purportedly failing to comply with the written description requirement.

By this Amendment, claim 10 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, and claim 1 has been amended to include the features formerly recited in now-canceled claim 10, and appropriately corrected as noted in the Office Action.

Withdrawal of the objection to the claim is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 17, 25 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as purportedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,406,133 to Abe. Claims 5, 14, 15, 18 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Abe in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,425,656 to Koeda. Claim 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Abe in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,508,539 to Tanaka. Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Abe.

In addition, the Office Action indicates that claims 7, 10, 19-23, and 27-28 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in

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independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this Amendment, claim 10 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, and claim 1 has been amended to include the features formerly recited in now-canceled claim 10, and claims 19 and 27 have been amended by rewriting them in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Each of the remaining pending claims depend from a corresponding one of independent claims 1, 19 and 27.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 19 and 27 and the claims depending therefrom are submitted to be now allowable.

In view of the amendments to the claims and remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that are required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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